

1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act to require the Department of Criminal Justice Services to administer a two-year pilot program to*
3 *provide a safe harbor for sex trafficked youth.*

4 [S 1292]

5 Approved

6 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**7 1. § 1. *As used in this act, unless the context requires a different meaning:*8 *"Department" means the Department of Criminal Justice Services.*9 *"Pilot agency" means the lead agency in the locality chosen by the Department to conduct the pilot*
10 *program required by § 2 of this act.*11 § 2. A. *The Department, in consultation with the Virginia State Crime Commission, shall identify a*
12 *suitable locality to administer a two-year Demand Reduction and Safe Harbor for Domestic Minor Sex*
13 *Trafficked Youth pilot program beginning July 1, 2023, and ending July 1, 2025. Such program shall*
14 *consist of the following elements:*15 1. *The pilot agency shall focus on (i) implementing proactive reverse sting operations that target*
16 *buyers of sex services, with priority given to cases involving sex trafficked youth; (ii) utilizing a*
17 *multidisciplinary response team to coordinate assessment and treatment for victims of sex trafficking;*
18 *and (iii) designing an alternative to an arrest protocol that includes a 48-72 hour holding mechanism*
19 *for youth either in partnership with a local department of social services, a local department of child*
20 *protective services, or a local hospital or through court services. The stated goal of the pilot program*
21 *shall be to reduce the arrest of sex trafficking victims, reduce demand for commercial sex exploitation*
22 *by focusing on buyers, and establish high-quality education, alternative employment opportunities, and*
23 *life skills for victims;*24 2. *The pilot agency shall report by July 1, 2024, to the Department all state and local laws,*
25 *ordinances, and regulations initially identified for elimination, amendment, or streamlining. The pilot*
26 *agency shall identify any law, ordinance, or regulation proposed for elimination or modification that*
27 *requires a change in state or local law. If the pilot agency is unable to reach this goal, it shall provide*
28 *a separate report to the Department stating the reasons for not meeting the goal.*29 B. *The Department, in consultation with the Virginia State Crime Commission, shall report annually*
30 *to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Attorney General no later than October 1, 2024, and*
31 *October 1, 2025, on the progress of the pilot program established pursuant to this act.*32 C. *The location of the pilot program shall remain confidential until conclusion of the program. Any*
33 *reference to location shall be anonymized in published documents.*

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